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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/731,151	12/10/2003	Goro Katsuyama	246317US 2 CONT	4789
22850	7590	05/18/2006	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.			BRASE, SANDRA L	
1940 DUKE STREET			ART UNIT	
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			PAPER NUMBER	
			2852	

DATE MAILED: 05/18/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/731,151

Applicant(s)

KATSUYAMA ET AL.

Examiner

Sandra L. Brase

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 3-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 3-5, 7-15, 17-20 and 22-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 6, 16, 21 and 25 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 10/102,967.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2/13/04; 12/27/04 & 7/15/05
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____

DETAILED ACTION

Double Patenting

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 3, 4, 7-10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 22 and 24 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,690,901. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because it is considered to be obvious that the support of the reading block (scanner unit) would also support the operation block (operation panel) since the operation block is located at the front side of the image reading block, and it would also be obvious that the support of the reading block would form an opening to the sheet discharge section that is open in

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at least two directions given that the image reading block is supported only at one side and at the rear end.

3. Claims 11, 12, 19, 20 and 23 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,690,901 in view of Okauchi et al. (US 5,839,025).

4. Claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,690,901 disclose the features mentioned previously, but does not contain limitations as to the fixing roller. Okauchi et al. (...025) disclose an image forming apparatus that includes a fixing device including a pair of fixing rollers (54a and 54b). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have a fixing device so as to fix a toner image to a recording medium.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claims 3-5, 7-15, 17-20 and 22-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kaiho (US 6,438,339).

7. Kaiho (...339) disclose an image forming apparatus, comprising: a scanner unit (3) configured to scan an image; a printer unit disposed below the scanner unit and configured to form an image on a recording medium (col. 3, lines 32-65; and figures 3 and 5); an operation

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panel disposed above the printer unit and adjacent a front side of the image forming apparatus, the operation panel configured to receive a command by which the image forming apparatus is operated (figures 3 and 5); a sheet discharge section (4) disposed between the scanner unit and the printer unit, the sheet discharge section configured to receive the recording medium including the image (figure 3); and a casing disposed adjacent a side end of the printer unit, the casing arranged to support the operation panel (figures 3 and 5); wherein a front side of the scanner unit is off set from a front side of the printer unit, and the scanner unit is supported by a side wall of the printer unit and forms an opening to the sheet discharge section that is open in two directions (figures 3 and 5). The operation unit is disposed adjacent the scanner unit (figures 3 and 5). The operation panel is connected to the scanner unit and the operation panel is off set from the front side of the printer unit (figures 3 and 5). The scanner unit is set back from the front side of the printer unit, the scanner unit does not extend past a plane in which the front side of the printer unit is disposed, and the front side of the scanner unit does not extend past a front side of the casing (figures 3 and 5). The front side of the casing is disposed in a same plane as the front side of the printer unit (figures 3 and 5). A fixing unit (15) is included in the casing, where the fixing unit includes a pair of fixing rollers (figure 3). The scanner unit forms the opening to the sheet discharge section that is open in first and second directions about perpendicular to one another (figure 5).

Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claims 6, 16, 21 and 25 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Inquiry

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sandra L. Brase whose telephone number is (571) 272-2131.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Arthur T. Grimley, can be reached on (571) 272-2136. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Sandra L. Brase
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2852

May 11, 2006